

# THE CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES OF UN PEACEKEEPING IN DARFUR

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**USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT**

**THE CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES OF UN PEACEKEEPING IN DARFUR**

by

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## **ABSTRACT**

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Over the past six decades, United Nations (UN) peace keeping operations have constituted one of the major components of the international security apparatus. Since its first mission in the UN Truce Supervision Operation (UNTSO) on the Arab-Israeli border in 1948, UN peace keeping has experienced both early successes in Guatemala, El Salvador, Mozambique, and Cambodia and a series of disastrous failures in Somalia, Rwanda, and Bosnia in the mid 1990s. Since the end of the Cold War, the UN organization has substantively transformed the peace operation process to adapt it to a newly emerging environment. Nevertheless, a major issue the UN is facing today is the extent to which it has the capacity to restore and keep the peace in the 21st century strategic environment. In this regard, this paper examines and studies the United Nations Mission in Darfur (UNAMID), as UNAMID is one of the most recent and significant missions. First, it will study the evolution of UN peacekeeping operations; second, address the nature and background of the conflict; third, address key issues related to the conflict; and finally, forecast the challenges and make policy recommendations to enhance the effectiveness of UN peace operations.

## THE CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES OF UN PEACEKEEPING IN DARFUR

Over the past six decades, United Nations (UN) peacekeeping has been a unique and effective international security mechanism to preserve fragile peace in conflict areas all over the world. Since its first mission in the UN Truce Supervision Operation (UNTSO) on the Arab-Israeli border in 1948<sup>1</sup>, there have been a total of 63 UN peacekeeping operations with 17 ongoing missions today<sup>2</sup>. As of November 2009, the UN has over 120,000 personnel on the ground to include 97,000 uniformed personnel from 115 member states. Although the UN efforts have experienced difficulties associated with peacekeeping and the UN's own problems over the course of their evolution, overall, these operations are widely believed to be a useful and cost-effective way to address many global conflict issues.<sup>3</sup> After the fall of the Berlin Wall, the UN organization has carried out a substantive transformation to adapt the peacekeeping process to a newly emerging world security environment. Nonetheless, due to a more complicated global landscape and the nature of conflicts, the UN is now experiencing an unprecedented increase in the scope, purpose, and mandates of peacekeeping operations deployed all over the world. Today, UN peacekeeping is being challenged by several complex issues, one of which is the extent to which the UN has the capacity to play an effective peacekeeping role in the complex 21<sup>st</sup> century strategic environment.

This paper is a case study of the Darfur conflict, which is a test case for modern peacekeeping operations. The mission is one of the quintessential contemporary peacekeeping missions in various aspects: It is one of the most recent missions, having been established on 31 July 2007; it is currently experiencing difficulties in fulfilling its mandate; and it encompasses ongoing key issues of UN peacekeeping. In this paper,

the researcher will first study the evolution of UN peacekeeping operations to determine where we are right now; second, address the nature and background of the conflict to better understand its complex dynamics; third, address the key issues of the conflict; and finally, forecast the challenges and strengths in the years to come and make policy recommendations to enhance the effectiveness of future peacekeeping operations.

Throughout the research, the author attempts to approach key issues from a broad perspective and to view the problems holistically through this case study rather than to take a micro-approach.

### The Evolution of UN Peacekeeping Operations

The term “peacekeeping” is not described in the UN Charter. It is a mechanism improvised by the UN to fulfill the goal of the organization, “to maintain international peace and security.” In the UN Charter, Chapters VI, VII, and VIII lay out the means for the Security Council to solve international conflicts. Chapter VI, titled “Pacific Settlement of Disputes,” describes peaceful methods to settle conflicts among nations, while Chapter VII, titled “Actions with Respect to Threats to the Peace, Breaches of the Peace, and Acts of Aggression,” provides coercive options such as economic sanctions, diplomatic pressure, or military actions. Chapter VIII of the Charter also provides for the participation of regional organizations in peacekeeping efforts. Although Article 43 of Chapter VII provides a legitimate foundation for the Security Council to form a UN standby force to take military action on its own initiative depending on the subsequent negotiation of special agreements with member states, no Article 43 agreement has ever been negotiated.<sup>4</sup> Former UN Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjold, who died in 1961 in an airplane crash in the Congo, described peacekeeping as “chapter six and a

half,” because the idea and nature of UN peacekeeping operations fall somewhere between Chapter VI, which is peaceful dialogue and mediation, and Chapter VII, which means the use of force.<sup>5</sup> Since its inception in 1948, this innovative system has continuously evolved, with the peacekeeping process adjusted to a changing geopolitical environment. Over the six decades, UN peacekeeping has generally been focused into two prominent forms: those of the period from 1948 to the end of the Cold War, and those of the post Cold War era.

During the Cold War period, due to the bi-polarized political and ideological landscape, the establishment of field missions was limited and difficult, especially when the region or country in question was related to the interests of the two super powers. The reason for this was that both of the two super powers, the United States and the Soviet Union, were permanent members of the UN Security Council (UNSC) with the power to veto any UN action that might be contrary to their competing interests. Most peacekeeping operations during the Cold War era therefore took place in countries where neither country had a significant national interest, mainly the Middle East. During the period, either the United States or the USSR vetoed over 200 UN resolutions.<sup>6</sup> As a result, between 1945 and 1990 only 18 UN missions were established, as opposed to more than 40 peace operations approved from the end of the Cold War until today. Most of the Cold War missions are referred to as “traditional” or “classical” peacekeeping: observing or monitoring cease-fire agreements to which the contending parties had consented and separating combatants after inter-state wars. During this period, the peacekeeping missions that were established strictly observed the principles of consent, impartiality, and non-use of force except in self-defense.

In contrast with the Cold War period, the demise of tension between the super powers generated consensus and a cooperative environment for global affairs, which led to more active and constructive use of UN peacekeeping by the Security Council. The Security Council reached a consensus on Iraq in 1990-1991 and for the first time since its existence, a summit-level meeting of the Security Council members was held in 1992. The combination of the cooperative international climate and a series of successes in Namibia (1989), El Salvador (1991), Cambodia (1992-1993), and Mozambique (1994) led the international community to perceive that peacekeeping is the answer to international conflicts.<sup>7</sup> Post Cold War geopolitics and increased intra-state conflicts brought about an explosion of UN peacekeeping operations. Those missions were generally complex ones characterized by large scale, daunting mandates and vast areas of operation (AOR). Frequently they involved tasks under Chapter VII of the UN Charter. Another feature of post Cold War peacekeeping operations is that they were often conducted in cooperation with appropriate regional security organizations. The UN mission in the Darfur region is one of these hybrid African Union (AU)-UN missions formed by an African Union force and UN peacekeepers. Since the early 1990s, there has been a newly emerging trend in the peacekeeping arena of humanitarian intervention. This new type of UN peacekeeping will be covered later.

Overall, the UN organization has modified its peacekeeping operations process, the creative and innovative multinational instrument to preserve international peace and security, through the Cold War era, post-Cold War period, and the beginning of the new millennium, finding a unique role for this instrument during the evolution. The international security environment in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century is characterized by regional and

local instability and conflict rooted in such diverse sources as historical animosity; ethnic, religious, or other forms of communal hostility; control over resources; and attempted regional hegemony.<sup>8</sup> Today, UN peacekeeping is at a critical juncture, facing a new strategic environment and challenges. It is approaching another defining moment. UN intervention in the Darfur conflict is an example of one of these new complex peacekeeping challenges.

### The Background and Evolution of the Darfur Conflict

The Darfur region of Western Sudan covers an area of some 190,000 square miles, which is approximately the size of France. The area has been the focus of the international community in terms of humanitarian disaster for nearly seven years. The conflict in Darfur began in early 2003 when the two Darfuran rebel groups, the Sudanese Liberation Movement/Army (SLM/A) and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) attacked Sudanese military installations as part of a campaign to fight against the historic, political, and economic marginalization of Darfur by the government. In retaliation, the Sudanese armed forces and the government-backed militia, the so-called, “Janjaweed,” launched brutal and ruthless attacks against civilians who shared the same ethnic identity with the rebels.<sup>9</sup> The fundamental cause of the conflict is complex. There are several drivers to the conflict: local politics between settlers and nomads, ethnicity, desertification, and geopolitics related to oil. With respect to ethnicity, which is believed to be a root cause of the conflict, some scholars characterize Darfuran ethnicity as being either “Arab” or “African.” A report describes the militias as predominantly pastoralists claiming an “Arab” identity, while the rebels are settled or semi-settled people self-identified as “African.”<sup>10</sup> It further explains that the exploitation of the tensions between the two ethnic groups was a tried and tested policy of the

Sudanese government: the Sudanese military was not strong enough to deal with the rebels in terms of tactics and training and the militias, who knew the terrain and carried arms to protect their herds, supported Sudanese policy in return for land and money. This type of militia strategy -- arm local tribes and encourage them to fight rebels instead of or combined with government forces -- is believed to have been used by the Sudanese government in 1985 to fight the southern rebels of the Sudanese People's Liberation Army (SPLM).<sup>11</sup> Another organization, The Save Darfur Coalition, one of the largest Darfur Advocacy groups, has issued an official statement about the use of "ethnic terminology": "The Save Darfur Coalition avoids framing the genocide in Darfur as a conflict between 'Arabs' and 'Africans.' Using this narrative oversimplifies the calculated and horrific campaign of the Government of Sudan and its proxy militia against the civilian populations and various ethnic groups of Darfur."<sup>12</sup> A report by Amnesty International notes that after an attack on the airport of al-Fasher (the capital of north Darfur) by rebels, the government of Sudan called for help from the nomad militia of Darfur.<sup>13</sup> The ethnic dimension is a critical part of the conflict but it is complicatedly associated with government policy to leverage local politics between pastoralists and settled populations for counter-insurgency operations.

Over the seven years of conflict in Darfur, the number of people victimized by the catastrophe is hard to calculate, but at least 200,000, and perhaps as many as 400,000, people may have died and nearly two million people have left their homes and are now living in refugee camps in Darfur and neighboring Chad.<sup>14</sup> The United Nations, as well as the U.S. government, recognized these atrocities carried out against innocent civilians by the Sudanese armed forces and its allied Janjaweed militia as genocide. In

2004, former U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell stated before the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee that the Darfur conflict constitutes genocide.<sup>15</sup> On 2 April 2004, the United Nations under-secretary general of humanitarian affairs and emergency relief coordinator, Jan Egeland, declared the Darfur conflict as "one of the most forgotten and neglected humanitarian crises in the world."<sup>16</sup>

The UNSC has passed several resolutions to resolve the conflict in Darfur since 2004: Resolution 1556 of 30 July 2004 demanding the Government of Sudan disarm the Janjaweed militia within 30 days; Resolution 1564 of 18 September 2004 establishing the Commission of Inquiry to investigate the atrocities in Darfur and authorizing an expanded African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS); and Resolution 1706 of 31 August 2006 authorizing the expansion of the existing UN Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) to include Darfur. This last resolution came right after the Darfur Peace Agreement was signed on 5 May 2006 under the auspices of the African Union (AU) and with support of the UN and other partners. On 31 July 2007, the Security Council passed another Darfur Resolution, 1769, authorizing the UN-AU hybrid mission in Darfur (UNAMID).

Overall, the Darfur conflict stems from diverse causes, including political, economical, social, and environmental reasons. It demonstrates the complex nature of 21<sup>st</sup> century conflicts. Although the conflict was defined as genocide by the UN and the United States, there has been little action from the international community to stop the atrocities on the ground. UNAMID, the existing UN mission in Darfur, continues to experience shortfalls in troops and essential assets due to the reluctance of the member states of the UN to provide adequate resources. The conflict has raised questions regarding the effectiveness of UN peacekeeping and the concept of Responsibility to

Protect (R2P), which is explained below. The intensity of violence has decreased since 2005, but the civilian people in Darfur continue to suffer from unacceptable living conditions and the situation still remains unresolved.

### Key Issues of the Conflict

*The Principles of UN Peacekeeping.* Although the form of UN peacekeeping has evolved and the nature of conflict also has dramatically changed over the course of its history, the three basic principles of UN peacekeeping -- consent of the parties, impartiality, and non-use of force except in self-defense and defense of the mandate -- remain the same.<sup>17</sup> These principles are closely inter-related, but the consent of the parties is central to establishing UN peacekeeping operations in conflict areas. This research will focus on the principle of "consent" because it has been the most crucial agenda in the conflict.

The Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA) was signed on 5 May 2006 between the Sudan Liberation Army (SLA) and Sudan's government under the auspices of the African Union (AU). However, two of the three primary rebel groups refused to sign the Agreement, which is a significant flaw. The rebel groups who did not accept the Agreement broke-up into even smaller groups and fought against each other. This type of violence made the situation worse in some areas. There is another important consent-related issue in the Darfur Peace Agreement. The Sudanese government, which is a party to the Agreement, has actively obstructed the deployment of UN peacekeeping forces into the conflict area. The Sudanese government did not approve non-African troops or night flights, claimed the right to block communications, did not allocate for UNAMID bases, and did not agree on resources for UNAMID.<sup>18</sup> Sudan said

“Yes” and then took every action to delay or undermine the UN operation on the ground. This is virtually a breach of consent.

As mentioned above, consent is central to UN peace operations, both Chapter VI and Chapter VII missions. It represents the will of contending parties in the conflict to follow and support the peace process supported by the UN. The DPA is a partial and fragile agreement between a rebel group and the Sudanese government, leaving the other rebellions and militias excluded from the agreement. Today, it is even reported that some of the militias who had been backed by the Sudanese government are beyond the control of Khartoum.<sup>19</sup> The Darfur conflict clearly demonstrates how difficult it is to gain and maintain consent from all contending parties, especially when it is a civil war type of conflict with several parties involved. Another element of the consent issue in the conflict is the level of consent, which should be different depending on the mandate. Observer missions may need minimum consent for the military observers to monitor compliance with the cease-fire agreement by both sides, but heavy mandates, including humanitarian assistance or peace enforcement, need comprehensive consent from both sides. Therefore, when a UN mission is planned, the level of consent should carefully be considered. The UNAMID is an ambitious mission under UN Chapter VII, but the consent on the ground is insufficient for the UNAMID to conduct its mission effectively.

*Humanitarian Intervention.* One of the key issues of the UN effort in Darfur has been humanitarian intervention by the international community. Just as in the case of the Rwandan genocide in 1994, the conflict in Darfur did not gain powerful international support, resulting in hundreds of thousands of people killed and millions displaced.

Today, the question in terms of UN peacekeeping is whether a UN peacekeeping mission is capable of halting such a humanitarian catastrophe in the complex 21<sup>st</sup> century security environment.

Humanitarian intervention is defined as “coercive action by one or more states involving the use of armed forces in another state without the consent of its authorities, and with the purpose of preventing widespread suffering or death among the inhabitants.”<sup>20</sup> There is a tension between each nation’s sovereignty and international human rights. This agenda has been continuously raised through catastrophic failures to protect human rights. In addition, the concept of R2P has reinforced the legitimacy of humanitarian intervention within the international community. R2P is a normative effort, which means that each country has the primary responsibility to protect its own citizens from human-made catastrophe, but when a state abdicates its responsibility, the international community has the responsibility to act. The conceptualization of R2P originated from former UN Secretary General Kofi Anan’s millennium address in 1999. He challenged the international community to examine the balance between the Westphalia Treaty-based concept of state sovereignty and the right of the international community to protect human rights. Canada accepted the challenge, came up with achievable recommendations, and formulated a doctrine entitled “The Responsibility to Protect” by the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS). The concept was later recognized by a 2005 World Summit.<sup>21</sup> The newly emerged normative framework of UN peace operations now provides legitimate grounds for the international community to intervene to protect civilians. On the other hand, there have been concerns from developing countries with regard to the R2P initiative. After Anan’s

justification of two sovereignties at the UN General Assembly in 1999, Algerian President Abdelaziz Bouteflika stated that “We do not deny that the United Nations has the right and the duty to help suffering humanity, but we remain extremely sensitive to any undermining of our sovereignty, not only because sovereignty is our last defense against the rules of an unequal world, but because we are not taking part in the decision-making process of the Security Council.”<sup>22</sup> In July 2009, there was another comprehensive debate on the issue of the R2P at the UN General Assembly. In the plenary debates, the vast majority of member states expressed their clear commitment to the prevention and halting of atrocity crimes.<sup>23</sup>

Although the conflict in Darfur has been enough to constitute a condition for the international community to fulfill the obligation of protecting human rights, the international community again failed to stop the humanitarian disaster. The Darfur conflict served as a test case for the global society to protect innocent civilians in the new millennium. Some people argue that genocide happens rapidly and is difficult to recognize under the veil of war; therefore, it is extremely difficult to respond quickly and effectively.<sup>24</sup> Most activists insist that the problem is the will of the international community, not the lack of resources or anything else.<sup>25</sup> Under the situation of the Darfur crisis and the existing framework of humanitarian intervention, the UN could have conducted either a humanitarian intervention or a robust peacekeeping mission under Chapter VII of the UN Charter without the consent of the Sudanese government. In terms of humanitarian intervention under international norms, the Darfur case demonstrates another failure to protect civilian populations from genocide.

### C. Geopolitics

Darfur is the quintessential case of a conflict whose solution is complicated by a power involved in the region. China established diplomatic ties with Sudan in 1959. Since that time, China has maintained good relations with Sudan through different Sudanese government administrations. The relationship between the two countries improved markedly during the government of Gaafar Muhammad al Nimeiry from 1969-1985. When an attempted overthrow of Nimeiry occurred in 1971, China, unlike Russia, demonstrated strong support to the Nimeiry government and later the Chinese government provided military training, equipment, economic grants, and technical expertise.<sup>26</sup> Many Sudanese still remember the Chinese contribution in the 1970s exemplified by the Chinese-built Friendship Hall in Khartoum. Although the two countries enjoyed a good relationship until the 1980s, their relations were dramatically accelerated in the early 1990s through oil cooperation. The current president of Sudan, Omar el-Bashir, who came to power in 1989, has maintained close economic cooperation with China in spite of his international political isolation, and economic sanctions from the UN and the United States. Currently, Sudan provides 7% of Chinese oil requirements. The China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC) is, at 40%, the largest shareholder in the Greater Nile Petroleum Operating Company, which controls Sudan's oil fields.<sup>27</sup>

As Sudan's primary partner for trading and oil investment, China has supported the Sudanese government by using its veto power at the UN Security Council to obstruct or prevent UN sanctions on Sudan.<sup>28</sup> China also has a history of selling weapons and military equipment to the Sudan government. After an intensive international campaign, including the "Genocide Olympics," China changed its stance

on Sudan and voted in favor of UN Resolution 1769, which authorized the UNAMID peacekeeping mission, (UNAMID replaced the existing AMIS on 31 December 2007).

The conflict in Darfur shows that when a power with strong national interests is involved in a region the geopolitical situation can be a serious obstacle to the solution of the conflict. China has been a strong protector of Sudan politically, economically, and militarily. China finally agreed to the deployment of a UN peacekeeping force in 2007, but already hundreds of thousands of people in Darfur had been victimized and more than 2.5 million still live in refugee camps in Sudan and neighboring Chad. The conflict in Darfur already has become a genocide that mankind has again failed to stop.

*Hybrid Mission.* The UNSC authorized the creation of a hybrid AU-UN peacekeeping mission in Darfur on 31 July 2007.<sup>29</sup> UNAMID became the first case since the first peacekeeping mission in 1948 of a hybrid form of peacekeeping mission in which two (UN and non-UN) peacekeeping elements of the organization merged into one chain of command and accountability. The mission is led by the AU, which is the main force providing regional organization, and is supported by the UN, which provides enabling capabilities such as equipment, logistics, and finance.

This hybrid formation has several advantages: First, it is another source of mustering the limited number of peacekeeping troops available in response to an increasing demand for peace operations. Although the current UN peacekeeping program has reached an unprecedented level in troop numbers and budget, there is no indication of a decrease in the demand for peacekeeping operations. Second, a regional organization's participation in the area provides the peacekeeping mission with a better opportunity to deal with the nature and root causes of the conflict.<sup>30</sup> Conflict in

Africa is particularly affected by complex regional and local issues among nations, ethnic groups, and tribal groups as well as among terrorists or insurgents. Familiarity with the indigenous issues and problems embedded in Africa will help the UN missions in the area address the inherent complex challenges related to local conditions.

While the AU participation in Darfur provides the above-mentioned benefits for UNAMID, there are also some areas that need improvement. First, the AU has political constraints from its member states, foreign powers, and host nations. Because member states continue to exercise influence on the AU mission, gathering political will for the AU mission is important to its success.<sup>31</sup> Second, financial constraints and logistical difficulties are obstacles to the AU's effective operation in Darfur. Third, together with the financial and logistical issues, readiness levels need to be improved. Experts say that the AU element of UNAMID has a long way to go before it is fully functional.<sup>32</sup> It is an understaffed, undermanned, undertrained, and under-resourced force.<sup>33</sup> As of July 2009, the AU force deployed to Darfur had reached about 13,500, which is still far from its authorized strength of about 20,000 personnel.

The UNAMID can be another significant step in the evolution of UN peacekeeping with its new approach in terms of resourcing, cultural context, and burden sharing with regional organizations. However, in reality, much still needs to be done to overcome all the current obstacles, and the situation in Darfur still remains unresolved and unstable.

### Challenges and Opportunities in Darfur

In January 2009, Alan Le Roy, the UN Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations said "Today, we are larger and spread more widely than ever before, with mandates that are more complex and robust than ever." He also added that

“we need to look at our own house and find new and innovative ways to tackle the challenges of modern peacekeeping.”<sup>34</sup> It is generally agreed that UN peacekeeping is at the most critical juncture of its six decade history. In Darfur, the UN has showed its limitations. It is critical to recognize where peacekeeping is today and what challenges lie ahead.

First, the scope of peacekeeping operations has expanded to its limit. Since the first UNTSO mission, peacekeeping has evolved from the traditional mode during the Cold War period through a post-Cold War complex mission and then to contemporary UN peacekeeping operations. Initially it was a military mission, but now, as its mandates demonstrate, the UN peacekeeping mission is much more than the tasks of uniformed personnel and includes fundamentally political operations supporting complicated transitions to peace within deeply divided countries.<sup>35</sup> Additionally, the humanitarian intervention reinforced by the Responsibility to Protect principle added a new dimension to the existing norm of peacekeeping principles. It should be noted that none of the contemporary UN missions is simple or easy to deal with. Humanitarian intervention is likely to become the predominant agenda in the future. The Darfur crisis is an example of an extremely complex mission in terms of the size and composition of troops, the mandate, the area of operation, the cause and nature of conflict, and the stakeholders surrounding the mission.

Second, the nature and environment of conflicts have dramatically changed. The 2009 Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) Year Book reports that for the fifth year running, no interstate conflicts were active in 2008. Only three of the 34 conflicts active in the period 1999-2008 were fought between states.<sup>36</sup> The landscape of

interstate conflicts the traditional UN peacekeeping operations dealt with has transformed to intrastate conflicts. This is more evident in Africa, where currently seven out of a total of 15 missions are deployed and more missions are expected in the near future.<sup>37</sup> Thus, the new–predominant type of conflict is the internal civil war or insurgency, of which, Darfur is a prime example. In Darfur, the contending parties are the Government of Sudan, government-backed Janjaweed militia, and rebel groups, which totaled three at the beginning of 2003 but later divided into more than twenty groups. Furthermore, to capture the cause of the conflict it is essential to understand the history, local politics of the Darfur region, ethnic groups, the character of the Sudanese government, and outside influences such as China.

Third, in the past the areas of operation for peacekeeping operations were usually borders between two parties including buffer zones. Today, however, the area of responsibility can be vast. In the case of Darfur, it is equivalent to the area of France. The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), where the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) is deployed, covers 875,520 square miles, a quarter the size of the United States. In the context of a military operation, it is not feasible to cover such huge areas with the authorized number of personnel.

Fourth, the UN is having difficulties in resourcing its peacekeepers. UNAMID, for example, is at 69 percent of its authorized 19,500 troops and only 45 percent of authorized police strength even though it draws its forces from both the AU and the UN. Utility helicopters and heavy transport vehicles, which are crucial to such missions, are not yet on the ground. In addition to overall resourcing of troops, rapidly deploying the

initial troops to respond rapidly is another crucial element for mission success. According to the Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations (called the Brahimi Report after the name of its chairman, Ambassador Lakhdar Brahimi from Algeria),<sup>38</sup> the first six to twelve weeks following a cease-fire or peace accord are considered the most critical time for a new operation and opportunities lost during that period are difficult to regain. Given the fact that the early stage of the conflict is extremely critical to efforts to contain the conflict or stop the deterioration of the situation, the UN needs to seriously consider how to obtain resources, troops, equipment, and materials effectively from member states.

### Conclusion/Recommendations

As the international community has witnessed through the development of conflict in Darfur, UN peacekeeping is now facing unprecedented challenges. It is time to evaluate the current challenges to UN peacekeeping and come up with a strategy that maximizes the benefit of the UN peacekeeping structure and mitigates these challenges. The following recommendations are based on a study of the UN experience with the Darfur conflict.

First, the UN peacekeeping effort must adhere to the fundamental principles and ideas: consent-based operations, impartiality, and the non-use of force except self defense. This is the foundation of UN peacekeeping legitimacy within the complex international landscape. Given the fact that the environment of peacekeeping is becoming more complex, usually taking place within large areas with complicated domestic civil war-type situations, limited resources, and multiple UN caveats, UN peacekeeping should focus on roles that meet the fundamental principles and are

conducted under the provisions of Chapter VI of the UN Charter. Chapter VII missions or humanitarian interventions ought to be carefully evaluated and conducted by either an exceptionally robust mission based on comprehensive international consensus or a UN-mandated coalition force with a temporary mandate. The Darfur conflict clearly demonstrates how daunting a UN mission under Chapter VII is.

Second, to increase the overall effectiveness of the effort, especially to respond rapidly to genocide or equivalent crimes against humanity, it is essential for the UN to have a certain number of adequately equipped standing or rapid response UN peacekeeping forces. A concept for a way to do this was proposed in 1990, but it has not worked out well.<sup>39</sup> However, this capacity is a central part of overall mission success especially to deal with humanitarian crises. This force could be a UN unit composed of member state peacekeepers, or even contracted forces. The current system of resourcing UN peacekeepers does not meet the requirement of response time, as we have seen in Darfur, and is not consistent with the political will of global society.

Third, given the fact that the resources are limited and missions are becoming more complex with increasing scope, size, and budgets, the UN should consider the establishment of new missions very seriously and selectively based on a strategic assessment. A report briefed to the Committee on Foreign Relations of The U.S. Senate recommended more judicious authorization of UN peacekeeping operations, explaining that “the pressure to do something must not trump sensible consideration of whether a UN presence will improve or destabilize the situation.”<sup>40</sup>

The conflict in Darfur demonstrates the complex dimensions of contemporary UN peacekeeping missions. There have been limitations, weaknesses, and challenges, but

the international community is still hopeful of its future given that the demand is not likely to decline in the near future and the global community has not yet invented any alternative. This is a defining moment in UN history and an appropriate time to revisit the fundamentals and principles of this innovative practice and to devise a solution to meet the challenges that lie ahead.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> The term “peacekeeping” was first used to describe the work of UN Emergency Force (UNEF), created by the General Assembly during the 1956 Suez Crisis. However, the UN Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO), established in 1948 to monitor the border of Israel, is generally deemed the first UN peacekeeping mission.

<sup>2</sup> Among 17 missions, 15 are peacekeeping missions and the other two (UNAMA in Afghanistan and BINUB in Burundi) are political and/or peace building missions directed and supported by UN DPKO.

<sup>3</sup> According to a U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) report on peacekeeping (*Peacekeeping, Observations on Costs, Strengths, and Limitations of U.S. and UN Operations*, testimony before the Committee on Foreign Affairs, House of Representatives, June 2007), it would cost the U.S. about twice as much as it would the UN to conduct a peacekeeping operation similar to the UN mission in Haiti.

<sup>4</sup> Jean E. Krasno ed., *The United Nations: Confronting the Challenges of a Global Society* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2004), 225.

<sup>5</sup> U.S. joint doctrine distinguishes among various peace operations. It defines peacekeeping as military actions undertaken with the consent of all the major parties to a dispute and peace enforcement as the application or threat of force to compel compliance with UN resolutions or to restore peace and order. See Joint Publication 1-02, *DoD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*, 12 April 2001, as amended through 31 October 2009. In this paper, the term peacekeeping is used in a general sense to cover all types of peace operations.

<sup>6</sup> Lawrence. Ziring, Robert Riggs, and Jack Plano, *The United Nations* (Belmont, CA: Malloy Incorporated, 2005), 97.

<sup>7</sup> Krasnos, ed., *The United Nations: Confronting the Challenges of a Global Society*, 246.

<sup>8</sup> Michael Moodie, “CONFLICT TRENDS in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century”, *Joint Force Quarterly* (2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter 2009), 20.

<sup>9</sup> Amanda F. Grzyb, eds., *The World and Darfur* (Montreal, Canada: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2009), 9.

<sup>10</sup> Julie Flint, *Beyond 'Janjaweed': Understanding the Militias of Darfur* (Geneva, Switzerland: Small Arms Survey, June 2009), 11-13.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid*, 16.

<sup>12</sup> Save Darfur Coalition Homepage, available from [www.savedarfur.org/pages/primer](http://www.savedarfur.org/pages/primer) (accessed 3 February 2010).

<sup>13</sup> Steven fake and Kevin Funk, *The Scramble for Africa: Darfur-Intervention and the USA* (Montreal, Canada: Black Rose Books, 2009), 5.

<sup>14</sup> U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, *The World Fact Book*, available from [www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook](http://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook) (accessed 30 November 2009).

<sup>15</sup> BBC News, "Powell Declares Genocide in Sudan," 9 September 2004, available from [news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/Africa/3641820.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/Africa/3641820.stm) (accessed 1 December 2009)

<sup>16</sup> Grzyb, *The World and Darfur*, 3.

<sup>17</sup> United Nations, "United Nations Peacekeeping Operations: Principles and Guidelines," Capstone Doctrine Draft No.3 (2008): 31, available from [pbpu.unlb.org/pbps/library/Capstone%20Doctrine%20--%20Consultation%20Draft.pdf](http://pbpu.unlb.org/pbps/library/Capstone%20Doctrine%20--%20Consultation%20Draft.pdf) (accessed 5 February 2010).

<sup>18</sup> BBC News: "Darfur peace force 'set to fail,'" 19 December 2007, available from [news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/Africa/7151931.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/Africa/7151931.stm) (accessed 5 February 2010).

<sup>19</sup> Flint, *Beyond 'Janjaweed'*, 15.

<sup>20</sup> Adam Roberts, "The So-Called 'Right' of Humanitarian Intervention," *Yearbook of International Humanitarian Law 2000*, Vol.3 (The Hague: T.M.C. Asser, 2002), 3-5.

<sup>21</sup> Grzyb, *The World and Darfur*, x,xiii.

<sup>22</sup> Thomas G Weiss, *Humanitarian Intervention* (Malden MA: Polity Press, 2007), 121.

<sup>23</sup> Global Centre for Responsibility to Protect, *Implementing the Responsibility to Protect, The 2009 General Assembly Debate: An Assessment*, GCR2P Report (August 2009): 1, available from [globalr2p.org/media/pdf/GCR2P%20General%20Assembly%20Debate%20Assessment.pdf](http://globalr2p.org/media/pdf/GCR2P%20General%20Assembly%20Debate%20Assessment.pdf) (accessed 5 February 2010).

<sup>24</sup> Alen J. Kuperman, "Rethinking the Responsibility to Protect," *The Whitehead Journal of Diplomacy and International Relations* (Winter/Spring 2009): 36-37.

<sup>25</sup> Alex de Waal, "No Such Thing as Humanitarian Intervention," *Harvard International Review* (17 Oct 2009): 4.

<sup>26</sup> Daniel Large, "Sudan's Foreign Relations with Asia," Institute for Security Studies, Occasional Paper No. 158 (February, 2008): 2, available from [www.iss.co.za/index.php?link\\_id=&slink\\_id=5652&link\\_type=&slink\\_type=12&tmpl\\_id=3](http://www.iss.co.za/index.php?link_id=&slink_id=5652&link_type=&slink_type=12&tmpl_id=3) (accessed 5 February 2010).

<sup>27</sup> Peter Brooks and Ji Hae Shin, "China's Influence in Africa: Implications for the United States," Heritage Foundation, February 26, 2006, available from, [www.heritage.org/Research/AsiaandthePacific/bg1916.cfm](http://www.heritage.org/Research/AsiaandthePacific/bg1916.cfm) (Accessed 5 December 2009).

<sup>28</sup> BBC News: "Chinese Leader Boosts Sudan Ties" 2 February 2007, available from [news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/Africa/6323017.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/Africa/6323017.stm) (accessed 5 February 2010).

<sup>29</sup> Hybrid operations refer to operations in which UN and non-UN forces share peacekeeping or peace enforcement responsibilities. There have been several hybrid missions in the 1990s: Kosovo (UN, NATO, EU), DRC (UN, EU), Chad (UN, EU), but UNAMID is the first case under integrated and single chain of command.

<sup>30</sup> John Peter Matthews Kobbie, *The Role of the African Union in African Peacekeeping Operations*, Strategic Research Project (Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S Army War College, 26 March 2009), 5.

<sup>31</sup> Roba Sharamo, "The African Union's Peacekeeping Experience in Darfur, Sudan," *Conflict Trends* (November 2006): 54-55.

<sup>32</sup> "The African Union," *Washington Post*, May 1, 2008

<sup>33</sup> "Backgrounder: The African Union," Council on Foreign Relations (1 September 2009), available from [www.cfr.org/publication/11616/african\\_union.html#p6](http://www.cfr.org/publication/11616/african_union.html#p6) (accessed 5 December 2009).

<sup>34</sup> UN Security Council 6075<sup>th</sup> Meeting (23 January 2009), 1, available from [www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2009/sc9583.doc.htm](http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2009/sc9583.doc.htm) (accessed 7 December 2009).

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>36</sup> Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, *SIPRI Year Book 2009* (New York, Oxford University, 2009), 70.

<sup>37</sup> According to *UN Peacekeeping 2009 Annual Report of Secretary General* ([www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/documents/pko\\_2009.pdf](http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/documents/pko_2009.pdf)), tentative plans for Somalia are being drawn up in the event of UNSC decision.

<sup>38</sup> On 7 March 2000, the UN Secretary-General Kofi Anan announced the Panel on UN Peace Operations. The Panel chaired by Ambassador Lakhdar Drahimi, Under-Secretary-General for special assignments supervised the effort to improve UN peacekeeping activities. And the final document is called "The Report of the Panel on UN Peace Operations" Available from [www.un.org/peace/reports/peace\\_operations/](http://www.un.org/peace/reports/peace_operations/) (accessed 5 February 2010).

<sup>39</sup> The United Nations Standby Arrangement System (UNSAS) was a system which was introduced in 1990 based on commitments by Member States to contribute specified resources within agreed response time for UN peacekeeping operations. Available from [www.operationspax.net/IMG/pdf/UNSAHandbook2003.pdf](http://www.operationspax.net/IMG/pdf/UNSAHandbook2003.pdf) (accessed 10 February 2010).

<sup>40</sup> Brett D Schaefer, “ United Nations Peacekeeping: Challenges and Opportunities, Testimony before U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations Subcommittee on International Operations and Organizations, democracy and Human Rights (July 23 2008), 9.